

- Bryan Schaaf: Meat Speak podcast powered by the Certified Angus Beef brand. It is mid November and that means we are going to pause all things that we talked about, at least from a culinary on the plate standpoint. We're going to talk today about giving thanks, not just to all the different things that we are thankful for in our day to day, but we're going to give thanks to the folks who worked tirelessly 365 days out of the year to put beef on our table. Of course, we're talking about the ranchers. I'm Bryan Schaaf with me as always, Chef Tony Biggs. Chef, how you doing, sir?
- Tony Biggs: Hey, Bryan. I am great. And I'm glad we're bringing this topic up because when I first began at Certified Angus Beef almost eight years ago, I was just educated and introduced to all our major ranchers that really produce amazing Angus cattle and the families. And man, it was just so down to earth, big hearts and just loving folks and they're the ones that make it happen for all of us.
- Bryan Schaaf: Yeah, I always look at it. I grew up on a dairy farm. What I learned about growing up on a dairy farm was I learned that I did not want to be on a dairy farm forever because that is a lot of work.
- Tony Biggs: I grew up on a lobster trap. And let me tell you, that just is brutal. Being out in the Atlantic Ocean and Cape Cod, pulling up these traps in January, come on.
- Bryan Schaaf: Try to milk the lobsters?
- Tony Biggs: It's terrible, especially if you get a blue one.
- Bryan Schaaf: That said, before we tear into the bulk of our episode today, we're actually going to sit down with a gentleman named Matt Perrier from... I would tell you the town but it's the middle of nowhere. It's near Wichita, Kansas, which is where a lot of the cattle are. Matt is going to join us here in a little bit. But before we start to talk about Matt, and his family, and his ranches story, we wanted to go straight to the source. So we have a third co host, Dianna Clark is not here today. She's actually across the parking lot. She's meat scientisting today. I think she's breaking carcasses with a group of distributors actually over there right now.
- Tony Biggs: Probably just seven carcasses.
- Bryan Schaaf: That's three and a half cows. That's amazing. So that said, let's go ahead and turn to our guest co host today, has spent a lifetime in the cattle industry, be it growing up on his family farm in rural Illinois, working to improve the overall quality level and amount of quality beef available as the head of supply development for Certified Angus Beef, or in his current role as the head honcho over the entire American Angus Association. There he oversees the day to day operations of the largest breed registry in the cattle industry and serves as a uniting voice for more than 25,000 farmers and ranchers across the country. Please welcome to the podcast one of the most eloquent speakers on the cattle

industry and man who can pull up a Richard Simmons sweating to the oldies Halloween costume like nobody else. Please welcome the pride of Michigan State University ghost party, Mr. Mark McCully. How are we doing, sir?

Mark McCully: I'm doing awesome. Right up until you threw that Richard Simmons costume [inaudible 00:03:31], just assume we keep that buried under the rocket, me too. But it is great to be with you guys. Bryan, Tony, as always,

Bryan Schaaf: We appreciate you taking time to join us. You are coming off of something from a social media standpoint, it's called Cattle Con which to me conjures up an image of a bunch of people dressed up as their favorite livestock. But it's not that, it is the convention of the American Angus Association. Tell us a little bit about that.

Mark McCully: We had an awesome event. We're down in Fort Worth Texas is just a great place to be, wonderful Texas hospitality for several days. We went in on Friday, we did actually some tours, went out to some branches and then Saturday, Sunday we did our overall convention. We had about 1600 Angus ranchers from all of coast to coast, border to border and they were with us, we actually had some of our Canadian friends came down and just lots of programming around... We did a lot of fun stuff. There was entertainment and inspirational speakers, and then we had a lot of educational tracks.

And then Monday, we did the business of the American Angus Association. We are a solely owned and governed by the members that raised registered Angus cattle, of course. So they came together as delegates of the association and did the business, we elected some new board members and did the business of the Association on Monday and called it a Cattle Con and it was awesome. We had lots of excitement. We're a group that we don't social distance very well, we like to get together and be face to face. We tried to do some things last year virtually and it was fine but man, it was just great to get all back together and lots of hugs and lots of reconnection.

Bryan Schaaf: We wanted to talk to you... It's nice. The podcast is in its third season. So this has now become an annual thing where we'd like to talk at least for one episode, generally, there are a couple where we really touched on it, but really getting back to the roots of cattle production, of going all the way back to the farm. Of course a year ago, the conversation centered around how everybody was reacting to COVID and of course, all the issues with slowdowns and the packing plants and supply issues and what's going on back at the farm. As we fast forward a full year later, when you look across the industry, especially coming off an event where you guys got to be together and tell stories and get a good idea, what is the general landscape of the cattle industry on the live side now? Of course, we talk a lot about what's going on the chef side. What's happening with the ranchers now?

Mark McCully: Things are really good for the most part, it's agriculture. So, you get a group of farmers or ranchers together and the first thing they want to talk about is the weather. And especially in the cattle business, when we so depend on rainfall to grow grass, grass grows cows. So we've had a number of our members, specifically up in the... California has been under drought for a long time, several years. More recently, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, those folks have tough up there.

Unfortunately, mother nature will fix this eventually, but those folks are really dealing with... They've had to reduce their herd size to get through winter, given the feed resources they have, have to buy feed, and of course, when it's like this, supply, demand, things get really expensive. That's a bit of a cloud over to some degree, but for the most part, I think demand continues to be so strong. You guys know that, as you mentioned Bryan, the processing issues that through COVID now just with labor. We're still not cranking like we need to and keeping cattle moving through the system and the prices are pretty strong and cattlemen are pretty optimistic.

Bryan Schaaf: I'll tell you what Mark, if you wouldn't mind sticking around, we are going to take a break and we're going to have a chat with Matt Perrier, who you've known for quite a while. I remember back in 2012, we did a pop up store in Chelsea Market in New York City and we staffed it for, I think it was on pretty much a full calendar month. If you know Chelsea Market, it's on the East Side of Manhattan. It's very New York. And to have a guy like Matt Perrier who check our website out, if you want to see what it looks like, he's as cowboys as they come. Tall, skinny cowboy hat and boots. Can you set the scene a little bit for us Mark, in terms of Matt and families like Matt and what they're doing now.

Mark McCully: Matt's a fantastic ambassador for the business. He's a young guy that came up through the American Angus Association Junior Programs and was involved in some of the leadership programs. He actually worked for us at the American Angus Association. That's actually when I first met him, back when I started back in 2000, when I was a CAB and then went back and returned back to the family operation. He's there with his dad and their families and they're trying to grow the business to sustain multiple families and work through the generational transfer of the ranching land and the business from one generation to the next. I know Matt's kids, I got to spend a little time with them this summer at Grand Island, Nebraska at the National Junior Angus show. His kids were there participating just like Matt did when he was a kid. They're a fun group. I know they have aspirations of going back and getting back into the ranching business at some time. They don't make them any better than the pair your family for sure.

Bryan Schaaf: Well said. So on that note, we're going to take a quick break. Stick around and join us. I'll be sitting down with Matt Pair from Dalebanks Angus ranch in Eureka Kansas, which every morning I would wake up and be like, "Eureka."

Mark McCully: You would.

Bryan Schaaf: There with cattle, right?

Mark McCully: You would do that.

Bryan Schaaf: I have coffee. Perfect. So stick around here on the Meat Speak podcast powered by the Certified Angus Beef brand. Back here on the Meat Speak podcast powered by the Certified Angus Beef brand coming to you via Zoom all the way from Eureka, Kansas. So let's go ahead and dive into the interview portion up today. Our guest is a fifth generation rancher. It's fifth generation, right?

Matt Perrier: I think that's right. Yeah.

Bryan Schaaf: Excellent. I was trying to do the math in my head. I was like, "I think it's five." He's a fifth generation rancher on his family farm in Eureka, Kansas. Just so you know, if you're a history buff, that's a property that goes back to 1867. In Kansas, that's just five years after Lincoln would have signed the Homestead Act. And if you're like myself, I'm like, "Why do I know that?" Google it, it'll take you all the way back to high school history class. So that's what we're talking about here.

As a graduate of Kansas State University, come on Kats. He and his wife, Amy, have five children growing up on the family farm in the Flint Hills of southeast Kansas where he served as a past president of the Kansas Livestock Association, the Executive Committee of the Kansas Beef Council and even worked once as a regional manager for the American Angus Association. Of course, we have some roots there as well. Please welcome to the podcast all the way from Dalebanks Angus, Mr. Matt Perrier, how you doing, sir?

Matt Perrier: Great. Thank you very much Bryan.

Bryan Schaaf: Fantastic. Alright. I have to tell you, if you don't exist in the cattle industry, which I have this weird... I live more on the non cattle and I exist more on the eating side of things, let's be honest. But I've spent enough-

Matt Perrier: Me too, actually.

Bryan Schaaf: But I've spent enough time in the cattle industry to know that when you are a seed stock producer like yourselves, sale day. It's generally once or twice a year. You guys have your sale coming up in four days from now. By the time-

Matt Perrier: Five days.

Bryan Schaaf: Five days. So by the time this actually goes out, it's going to be two days ago. So it'll be passed. But man, tell us about sale day, this is a huge thing for you guys, right?

Matt Perrier: It is a huge thing. It's a very important thing. Depending on the year, it's well over half and sometimes probably closer to three fourths of our revenue is generated in about a two hour time period. And so there's a lot of things that need to go right to make sure that it goes well. A lot of preparation goes into it. But yeah, it's a big day for our family and for our family's business and we're looking forward to that. It's a fun day, because there's people that we see once a year that we get to see there, whether they're customers or family that come in from a distance. But there is a lot of work and a lot of stress involved too. But yeah, it's a great event and always enjoyable to have behind us.

Bryan Schaaf: I understand that. Can you talk about that? I think it's something that a lot of people don't necessarily understand. Farms and ranches, it's not like you guys are getting a steady paycheck every two weeks like those of us who hold a nine to five job. This is what you spend an entire year building for.

Matt Perrier: Yes, it is different. And I suppose any small business is but especially with agriculture, doesn't matter if it's paycheck hours, there's nothing steady about raising cattle and that's the way I grew up and so I'm well accustomed to it. The odd thing for me was families that knew what their budget was monthly because they knew how much they were going to take in from mom or dad or both as paycheck and how much they could spend, and with us we didn't make any decisions until after the bull sale. And then you know you thought about whether you need to replace the vehicle or whether you're going to be able to go on vacation. Those all came after we saw how well the bulls and heifers sold the Saturday before Thanksgiving each year. So Thanksgiving ended up being, still does ends up being a very special holiday for us because hopefully, we have a lot to give thanks for.

Bryan Schaaf: Outstanding. Alright so before we go down the real subject, and that's of course your family and your farm, I've got a few more follow up questions about bull sales because I'm [inaudible 00:14:39], outside of it that I'm fascinated about this. I was going through your sales book which it's common practice before a sale. It's like a magazine where you guys have all of your different bulls and it's got the EPDs, which is basically the genetic traits of these bulls, which we've talked about at different times on the podcast over the past couple years. But the one question that I've never asked that I've always wanted, bull names.

Every bull has a name. Actually, one of my co workers laughed when I asked about that because I was like, "Is this a stupid question?" Because I'm from Ohio. I said, "Tell me about bull names." She said actually, her mom always talked about her dad. The only reason she said he had cattle was so he could name them. But when I looked through your bull catalog, you've got names like Big Texan, Thunder, Glory, Broken Bow, talk about the names. What does that mean?

Matt Perrier: Well, they all have one, and especially with registered cattle, which is what we're in, of course, the American Angus Association selling registered seed stock

where they're pedigreed all the way back to hundreds of years back. Our family is probably a little less creative than what some families would be. We channel our energy into collecting data and making selection decisions that hopefully benefit us and our customers. We don't spend a lot of time naming cattle. And so if you look back on that three generation pedigree on every animal in this sale, every bull is named after his sire or his dad, every female is named after her mom or her damn.

And again, sometimes when we sell that to say another breeder or an artificial insemination AI genetics company, they may change the name to try to jazz it up a bit. But yeah, if we use the bull called Thunder, every one of his sons is going to be named thunder and then he'll have a four or five digit tattoo brand that's after that to differentiate him in Angus herd book. And everybody names them. A lot of times they try to name them based off of something that they feel like they're good at. The Big Tex bull that you referenced is actually a really good bull that we bought down in Texas. But he's really what we call moderate frame. Got a lot of hip, and a lot of muscle, and a lot of depth and they're really nice females. They're not very big.

So we actually changed his name before we bred him to females because he was borderline short. We named him Big Tex, an irony but everybody has a name. It's just whether you choose to give the next generation a new one.

Bryan Schaaf: Understood. I appreciate that clarification. Years ago, I remember being at, it was Bell point Ranch, which is in Lavaca, Arkansas, right outside of Fort Smith. And the marketing behind some of these bulls was... They had buttons. They used to have a bowl called Dr. Spock. I think they had advertisements and say like, "Treat your cows right with Dr. Spock." Realizing that they're selling bulls, which is very funny to those of us who didn't grow up around that stuff. So I am completely digressing. But I appreciate you answering my stupid question.

Matt Perrier: [inaudible 00:18:03].

Bryan Schaaf: Let's talk about you guys. Dalebanks Angus. You're in Eureka, Kansas, you're down in the Flint Hills, this is a farm that's been in the family since 1867. What is that like? As somebody who's obviously from there, your grandparents, great grandparents, what is it been like... We ask a lot of chefs this, we asked farmers this as well. But has there ever been a point in your life you were like, "I think I'll go do something else." Or was ranching farming always in the cards for you?

Matt Perrier: I don't think I've thought that since I don't know yesterday or the day before. Honestly, there's always times no matter what your job or your profession or your passion is, you question, "Was this where I was supposed to be? Is this the path that I'm supposed to be on?" With agriculture, right or wrong, it is a given that 90 some 96, 7, 8% of America's farms and ranches are family owned. And quite often, they are family managed and family labored and everybody does everything and there is an expectation by most families and neighbors around

the family that the next generation at least one of the kids 'will come back and buy the family ranch or farm from mom or dad, or grandma or granddad or whatever.'

So it's a blessing and a curse. There's always that opportunity that is there and there's always this expectation that somebody will take advantage or carry that legacy on. I honestly didn't think it would be me, to be honest with you. I grew in the 80s, and if anyone was involved with production, agriculture, farming, ranching, whichever, the 80s weren't a lot of fun. 19, 20% interest rates and some weather challenges, but a lot of political and economic factors, both domestically and globally that really had some dire repercussions on farmers and ranchers.

And I watched mom and dad work their tails off and the blood, sweat and tears just to keep things together and I didn't want to be part of it. It did not look like a worthwhile career. And honestly because they knew how tough it was, they didn't really push us kids in one way or the other. They encouraged us. Their rule was, you work hard in school, you graduate, you go to a further education somewhere outside of Eureka Kansas and preferably go get a job and make a paycheck from somebody else that's not blood relative before you even think about coming back to Dalebanks, Angus.

So I did, and I think everybody in the community knew that I would probably not show back up in Kansas, but after about, let's see, 12 years away from Eureka, four years at Kansas State, a year or so at Pennsylvania working with retail food service beef promotion for Beef Council. And then like you said, about six or seven or almost eight years with the American Angus Association, my wife, Amy, and our daughter who had time was not quite a year old, Eva, who's now a freshman at Kansas State, we moved back in '04 and so we have been working with my mom and dad ever since then. I have a brother and sister who live away from Eureka but still are somewhat involved with some of the goings on here, albeit from afar.

But we're very fortunate as a family that all of us still get along very well and everybody does have some input on the family business. It just happens that Amy and I are the ones right now that are here on location.

Bryan Schaaf: You're at ground zero. You mentioned you and Amy, you mentioned Eva. Today you guys have five kids, right? [inaudible 00:22:23].

Matt Perrier: We do.

Bryan Schaaf: And you say... Yeah, Eva is there and-

Matt Perrier: Eva is 18, and then we step down to Hope who just turned three years of age. They're spread out quite a bit. Yeah. So Eva is 18, almost everybody's ages up

here. Ask me about cattle names and I'm fine. Lyle is 15, Hannah is 13, Henry, almost 11 and then Hope who's three.

Bryan Schaaf: Outstanding. Funny, we were actually just chatting with Mark McCully earlier in the episode about this labor issues everywhere. Well, if only all these restaurants chefs just had five kids, right?

Matt Perrier: Yeah. Well, I've seen it there's pretty cool family restaurants and you look back there and see there's good Boston in the back. My kids would argue whether that's a great thing or not. But it is fun to see the family all pitching in when we can and working together.

Bryan Schaaf: Can you talk a little bit about that? It is the true dynamic of a family farm. I grew up on a dairy farm. I learned from growing up on a dairy farm that I did not want to be a dairy farmer for the rest of my life. But what is that like? What's a typical day for you guys? With the kids and different responsibilities and different kids gravitate towards different tasks around the farm?

Matt Perrier: Yeah, they do. And like the steady paycheck, there's really nothing typical about a day. For instance, during the school year, how our kids go to school, we live about 12 miles out of town and so on gravel roads. It's about a 20 minute trip to town. This morning for instance, our son Lyle, who's a sophomore, had early morning basketball practice, they have two a day basketball practices here for the first week or two of the season. So up and gone by 6:00 or 5:30 to be in there for six o'clock practice and then has practice afterwards and you throw in some quiz ball practices and they're all involved in the 4H and FFA programs and so they have judging practices and you name it.

There are a lot of activities that go on and so that while they're in grade school, junior high, high school, I shouldn't say that's their job, but we do make sure that if they're interested in doing some of those activities, that we make time for them to do those. As far as actual labor here at Dalebanks, we have four full time folks, myself and my dad who says he is semi retired or part time but is the hardest working semi retired guy that you'll see. But in addition to dad and I, we have two non family employees as well. Eric Burden that's been with us for, in February it will be 20 years, and then Levi Winchester who also works with us and has been here in February would be his first year.

But we're really fortunate to have both of those guys, especially, as Mark talked about with labor issues and shortages, I think it's difficult to find any help at all in today's climate and to find two dedicated guys like we've got is unheard of. So we're very fortunate in that regard. When we have big projects, harvest, working care, AIC's and things like that, a lot of times we will bring the kids in and help whether it just be one or two of them or whether it be all four. We haven't gotten Hope helping yet. She said, three, she's not quite there, but hopefully will be soon. But no, we want to work in caves in the spring and the fall.

Those kids will love doing that and step up and everybody has their job and it's really good for them whether they are the best hand or just getting started. It is tremendous growth for our youth regardless of what job it is for them to have something paper route, whatever it is, I mean, there aren't such thing anymore. But that's the nice thing about growing up in agriculture, is there's never a shortage if everybody will just take the opportunity and see that there's never a shortage of opportunities for those kids to learn the value of hard work and getting their hands dirty and seeing that it's worth doing a job, doing it well, and seeing the fruits of your labor.

Bryan Schaaf: Outstanding. Yeah, I would imagine you learn real quick to not at least verbalize the phrase, "I'm bored."

Matt Perrier: Yeah. No, that's the kiss of death around our family.

Bryan Schaaf: You know, I remember a few years ago, we're actually up at the Lindemann ranch up in Princeton, Nebraska. So a couple hours north of you guys, I guess a little south of Omaha. And we had a big group of chefs, so we did a big dinner there. And then the chef's got on the bus and headed back to Omaha and a couple of us stuck around to clear tables. And they pulled the shootout in the barn and they started AI in cattle. I mean, half an hour after, a whole group of these fantastic chefs from around the country were dining in their barn, we're running cattle and it just pitched in and the kids were just all over. And I mean, as much critique is there about young people in the next generation, man, farm kids haven't skipped a beat in all these years.

Matt Perrier: Yeah, that's a great story. And we see it all the time and I think you're right. I mean, people ask me, what do we raise? You raise crops? Do you raise cattle? Mom and dad always used to say, "We raise kids." And sometimes I think we forget that whatever it is that makes the cash flow work, hopefully cash flow in a positive direction. But whether that's cattle, or whether that's wheat, or whether that's corn, or peaches, or whatever the case may be. Quite often, it's a medium to help us raise a family. And I know that sounds hokey, and sometimes it doesn't make the most financial sense. But we have to recognize that there is value and in the most important product that I think it is that we're probably growing here, and that's our youth.

Bryan Schaaf: Awesome. Well said. We should put that on a billboard.

Matt Perrier: I wouldn't be able to say it again twice. Hope you're recording this.

Bryan Schaaf: Oh, believe me, I had this nightmare that I forget to hit the record on one of this. Hasn't happened yet, but it's all down. Just briefly, can you talk about... I invite everybody who's listening, if we wrap with this and you still want more, just Google or YouTube Dalebanks Angus, Matt Perrier, and you'll find a couple videos that I was watching this morning where you guys were talking about...

The family brought in their first black hided cattle back in like the 1900s, almost a century ago.

But it's really kind of been, I guess at least relatively speaking, a recent phenomenon that you're raising these cattle based on the carcass quality, the eating merit. So what are those standards? Can you talk about that? As we talk to a lot of different people, generally, we're talking to the end users or meat scientists, can you talk about the kind of focus that you guys are putting on raising those animals so they hit that high quality endpoint, as opposed to just raising for pounds on the huff?

Matt Perrier:

Sure, I'd love to Brian. That's exactly right and that's what I grew up as a child hearing my dad over in the office on his, of course, landline phone hooked to the wall. He'd spend hours every night talking to fellow Angus breeders or to commercial customers who were buying our bulls about, talk some about their weaning weight and their genetic ability to improve the customer's calf crop. But a lot of times those conversations were about, why am I using Angus and not some other breedable that'll maybe make them grow a little bit bigger, grow a little faster. And we all know, well I shouldn't say it this way, but at that time the meat quality, the beef quality of some of these other big exotic breeds weren't what Angus were.

And the question would always arise in the 70s 80s, even early 90s, well, who's paying me to use better quality genetics? Who's paying me to make better beef? And I mean, just insane amounts of time that were spent thinking through and cussing and discussing what we had to do to make good beef that was a little more worth at fine white table cloth restaurants and upper end retailers, but probably not enough more and was worth no more when it came the ranchers time or the feedyards time to sell that to the packer.

And so fast forward to today where we have value based marketing arrangements to where we can get paid premiums for the high quality, high marbling type beef that meets consumers demands, and then take discounts for the ones that don't necessarily. And so, the youth today don't remember the time when they were all worth 65 cents a pound, regardless of whether they were the best quality Angus or the toughest eating experience anybody ever had. And so, today we do get rewarded. Some would say we may not get rewarded quite enough. But the fact of the matter is, the model is there that incentivizes the production of beef that meets what it is that consumers are demanding. And I think it's a great time to be in the beef business and there's a lot of opportunities for growth there. And just keep your chefs, and your retailers, and folks doing such a great job of serving that to our consumer, their customers, because it's a great partnership.

Bryan Schaaf:

Outstanding, well said. Before we wrap, just a couple more questions. Five kids, obviously your kids are very involved on the ranch. The ultimate hope when you

look back at the history of your property, at the history of Dalebanks, is there hope that one of them is going to stick around?

Matt Perrier:

I don't know it. Oddly enough, Amy and I just had this conversation two nights ago with some rancher friends of ours who I had dinner with. I don't know, I mean, I want them to do what they are called to do and what they enjoy and what they're passionate about. Because the last thing that I want to do is either ask them to come back and tell them they have to, because it's been done. I mean, I haven't ever seen that in my family, but it is a thing. But I also don't want to shove them away and say either A, "You don't want to have to work this hard." Or B, "There's two or three or four of you or five of you who all want to come back, and everybody knows this ranch won't support that many of you."

So we do the best we can. When it comes calibrating, our focus is balanced of a lot of different traits; muscling, marbling, reproductive, efficiency, growth. I try and Amy tries to find that same balance in our kids, whether it be between sports and academics, and involvement in activities, and church and family time. I want them to get exposed to as many things that allows them to find their talents and go put those talents and their passion into a profession. And if that is ranching, or farming, great. If it is four or five of them, they're going to have to figure out or we are going to have to figure out a way to make room for all of them.

I don't think that will be the case but if none of them want to, I'm not going to beg them to. Maybe I'll change in a few years but I don't have this feeling that we have to continue this legacy. Everything has a sunset, and there's probably bigger things on the horizon than just whether somebody continues on the Dalebanks legacy. I'd love it if somebody did, but I'm sure not going to force somebody into it because it's not going to be good for them or me.

Bryan Schaaf:

Alright, couple more questions before we wrap here. Years ago, the first time and unfortunately, I think we just missed each other on this trip, but I think it was 2012. We had an opportunity to take over a space in Chelsea Market in New York City, and we were there for a solid month. And as a company, we staffed it every single day for a full month and we put on a series of dinners with chefs and Craig Deal came in and John Doherty came in, but we also had ranchers from around the country who had come in and you guys were one of them. Can you talk to us a little bit about what that was like? Because what we have found over the years, anytime you bring people in cowboy hats to New York City, there are always stories that come out of that.

Matt Perrier:

Yeah, no doubt it was a blast and Amy and I loved it. And funny story, my mom who... The running joke around most family farms and ranches is, the only time you get to go on a vacation is when the next cattleman's or breed association meeting is somewhere. And you just hope that it's somewhere besides 20 minutes down the road. So some of our family vacations would have been while my dad was on the American Angus Association Board of Directors and we got

to go to Kansas City, Missouri. And one time we got to go to Williamsburg, Virginia, and all these different great far off places.

Well twice, once with you all through CAB and once through US premium beef, we would also obviously sell a lot of CAB. Amy and I got the opportunity to go to New York City and my mom was like, "Only Matthew gets to go to New York City on a cattleman's trip." But no, that was a blast and I'm no foodie but I do really enjoy cooking and especially grilling and BBQ, and so I appreciate some of your posts. But that was a really cool thing to be right there in Chelsea and see the Food Network Studios, we got to take a tour up through there.

And it's just amazing to me how popular cooking has gotten. How trendy because I remember seeing the first microwave that I'd ever seen in my life as a young kid and it just... There was a time there that you just, nobody was going to cook, nobody needed to know how to cook. And the faster you could get it from the refrigerator onto the table, the better. Well, fast forward to today, and it's become this art form. And a lot of us aren't necessarily great at it, but we still enjoy the process. And so standing in there with you all and getting to see the folks, the James Beard dinner I think that night, and it was phenomenal to see how excited people get over sustenance, food. I mean, this is a product that is a necessity for them to be eating but they're sure put in a lot of extra into it and that's exciting to see.

Bryan Schaaf: Outstanding. Alright, last question. It's funny you kind of led me into this, right? We have a girl named Paige who handles all the social media stuff. One of the greatest things about Certified Angus Beef is they hire people who are like, if they left me up to do social media, I can't help you. But Paige Clayton runs all of our social media. She makes sure you ask these pertinent questions across every episode. So every guest that we've ever had on this podcast we asked them, what as a cattleman, as somebody who knows the live side of the animal business.

And actually, I know you know how to cook as well because I was one of the judges at the National Junior Angus when you guys did a video submission. I don't know if those are still available online to watch but that one, I mean, especially when you see your youngest eating the steak. I mean, she couldn't get enough of it right? Obviously clear cut winner, right? That said, Matt Perrier if you have a choice of any cut of meat or any kind of steak that you are cooking at home, what are you going for?

Matt Perrier: Kansas City strip or New York, wherever you are. But yeah, the strip. The strip is my favorite.

Bryan Schaaf: Actually, and how do you prefer to cook it. You grill it?

Matt Perrier: Oh, yeah. Whichever way you can get it to rare to medium rare. I like grilling but I like it anyway with just a little black pepper or some kind of seasoning that'll spice it up just a bit. But yeah, I'm a strip guy.

Bryan Schaaf: Outstanding. You broke the mold here. I think we've had three or four in a row that have all been either rib eye or parts of the rib eye. So thank you for-

Matt Perrier: Yeah, everybody's a rib eye guy. I'll tell you the truth, and I'm probably just a little bit of a tightwad, but a good sirloin? I like something with a little bite to it. And so usually the strip is kind of the happy medium in there. You're not going to have a wreck, you have a little bit tougher one of a sirloin. But yeah, I like the strip.

Bryan Schaaf: Amen. You heard it here first. Before we turn you loose, can you give us some plugs? Where can people find you? Where can people follow you? I know Dalebanks, you guys are pretty active on the Instagram. I know for sure.

Matt Perrier: Yeah, we do some Instagram, Dalebanksangus. Also Facebook. And then we've got our website www.Dalebanks.com.

Bryan Schaaf: Perfect. And if you are there, well I guess by now it'll be after the fact by the time this actually goes live. But the bull sale, the brochure, the pamphlet of all of the different bulls that you guys are selling is there. Tony Biggs and I have always talked, it's always cool... "It'd be cool to have a burger named after us." But I'm changing, I want a bull named after us next. So if you can help us find that, that would be fantastic.

Matt Perrier: I'll see what I can do. There'd be a few in North Dakota that would use your last name quite a bit. Probably no relation, but you're already well on your way there. I'll let you figure that one out. You [inaudible 00:41:34].

Bryan Schaaf: All right. I'll see what we can do. On that note, Mr. Matt Perrier from Dalebanks Angus in Eureka, Kansas, which if you're doing the math, it's just a little bit east of Wichita. Right?

Matt Perrier: 60 miles.

Bryan Schaaf: 60 miles east of Wichita. It's a good place in the Flint Hill. Sir, I appreciate you taking time especially in the lead up to the big bull sale for joining us here on the Meat Speak Podcast. Stick around, we'll be back with Mark McCully from the American Angus Association, myself and Tony Biggs just after this. So Matt Perrier, thanks for joining us.

Back here on the Meat Speak Podcast powered by the Certified Angus Beef brand paying homage to the folks who spend their livelihoods putting delightful steaks on the plate. Brian Shaw, Chef Tony Biggs, Mark McCully, CEO of the American Angus Association. The Perrier family mark, you talked about it just

before we went to the break. The industry, right? It's always about that kind of next generation. Family farms are a thing that has always been around. You're a farm kid from the middle of Illinois. As you look at the association, it's got to make you feel warm and fuzzy when you see the children of some of these people who you know have been involved for a long time becoming members of the American Angus Association.

Mark McCully: Yeah, it really does. It's funny, we just come off our convention. We celebrated the Angus family. I know we use that term a lot. But it's so true when you get people together and groups together that are given actually real families, multiple generations of families. But then there's a bond across, I believe that the Angus breed of cattle and those that raise it, and those that are involved in the production of it. And I don't know, maybe it exists in some other places, some other industries, other supply chains. I guess I'm not familiar with it if it does, but it's pretty cool.

I think it's pretty cool when we bring... As an association we bring over 22,000 independent individual members together, and when they can join together as an association that allows them in a day and age where there's more concentration, there's more vertical integration and other proteins. I call a strong association, kind of a great hedge for independent ranchers and independent farmers to stay independent. And I can tell you when you talk to them, they are fiercely independent and they want to stay that way.

That is kind of a lifeblood of the cattle industry of being out there taking care of their animals, taking care of their land. And they know they've got to get to do things in a more coordinated way. They know that the consumer and the chefs and the end users are all asking for more things and more documentation, but they love doing what they do. And being a part of the American Angus Association, they're so proud of Certified Angus Beef. When we pull the breeders together, they're so proud of Certified Angus Beef and that they as an Angus breeder, have this connection to this global brand and have partners and chefs around the world and grocery operators. They take such great pride in that.

Bryan SchAAF: Excellent. We've talked vaguely about it, actually a couple episodes already this season. We've talked about the overall quality level in beef fry. Of course, we're biased with certified Angus beef. But overall, the quality level has continued to get higher. There's more prime beef in the market. There's less select beef always in the market. That's not just a happy accident, right? It always amazes me when we have people in our meat lab and we talk about the fact that there's real intentionality from the ranchers trying to raise their animals in a way that is going to lift that entire ship. Can you talk about that perspective?

Mark McCully: No, it's very intentional. I was actually in an email exchange last night with an Angus breeder and he only made the statement that, when you give us as breeders a target and then meeting Certified Angus Beef, the target I think it's

been an industry target for breeders. For years and years back cattlemen raised cattle, and they didn't really know what the in product really was, what the quality was, whether it was tough whether it was juicy, they didn't know. But now, we put a target out there and with 10 science-based specifications around the brand, it's been a target for the industry to shoot for. And then we come alongside them as the association and give them tools, selection tools, genetic tools, and we can make genetic selection and get them data back into their herds to let them know how they're doing and where they make improvement. And for, a good 15 to 20 years, there's been a really intentional focus on making the cattle better and producing higher quality end product and that's what we see today.

Bryan Schaaf: Excellent. And that's why hopefully, this Thanksgiving coming up, there are some people saying, "You know what, we've done turkey long enough. Let's have a prime rib or a whole strip." Tony Biggs, is that what you're cooking up?

Tony Biggs: Well, hey, watch it because we got some turkey listeners out there too Bryan. So we don't want to lose them.

Bryan Schaaf: Hold on here. Okay, so here's my right. I'm certainly not one to diss the bird. I will tell you that our friends, Greg and Kristina [inaudible 00:47:22] from Chicago culinary kitchen, who both been on the podcast at various times, they will do Thanksgiving turkeys more power to them, they will take those Thanksgiving turkeys, they will inject them with so much brisket fat that's been rendered down that you squeeze the turkey brisket that shoots out. I mean, I can get on board with Turkey if that's if that's how it's being served. But guess what? I'm doing that same recipe from Greg and Christina for Thanksgiving, along with a smoked prime rib Certified Angus Beef.

Mark McCully: But guess what? I'm doing that same recipe from Greg and Christina for Thanksgiving along with a smoked prime rib certified Angus beef. You have to have the turkey in the stuffing and pumpkin pie.

Bryan Schaaf: Yes, pumpkin pie. Actually I'll tell you what, before we let you go Mark, can you give us some plugs? There's for now more than it's not even really a trend anymore. People want to know where their food comes from. Obviously, the American Angus Association has a huge part of that with your individual... Can you give us some plugs. Where can people find you? Where can people follow you? Where can people get a better understanding of what this is all about?

Mark McCully: Yeah, you bet. Certified Angus beef has... Obviously on the website, there's connections there if you go to looking at some of the ranching partners. We have a lot of our things are very much designed our feed producer facing. But angus.org is our website where you can find more of our story and maybe get some glimpses of the types of things that we do for cattlemen. Again, I caution you ahead of time, it is definitely producer facing. So when a cattleman lands

there, they understand a lot of our jargon and acronyms, we got to get better at that.

And we've got our social channels out there on all the media or all the multimedia channels as well. And yeah, it's fun showcasing the breed. It's fun showcasing the brand. And we had a real quick, we open our session. I wish I could show the video and play the song here. But it was a song called 'Why we do what we do'. And we brought a panel, a group of people in a middle restaurant tour, and we had some producers and they just came out and they shared their heart of why they do what they do. And that's the way we kicked off our conference. And I'm still riding on the buzz of that because that is just so cool. I think sometimes we get really hung up talking about what we do and we don't spend enough time talking about the why we do what we do. And I'm pretty proud of our farmers and ranchers in this association. Our wise is kind of cool.

Bryan Schaaf: Outstanding, well said sir. And you know what? I'll get my hands on that video and when this episode launches, we'll make sure we have that in our arsenal.

Mark McCully: Fantastic.

Bryan Schaaf: It's a different media piece that you can access. So that said, when this does launch, know that this is the Meat Speak Podcast powered by the Certified Angus Beef brand. So of course we're a little bit biased, but we like to be open minded as we can. And you can find it across all their major podcasting platforms; Google Play, Apple, Spotify. Paige, our social media guru would like us to put a particular emphasis on the Apple podcasting, that's a little purple icon on your phone.

If you can go there, leave us a star rating, leave us a review. It's not about our egos. It's about my ego really. It's not about Tony's ego. But what that does, that helps us with the overall visibility getting this podcast out there. Of course, we're a non-profit owned by the American Angus Association, which means we're owned by the farmer. So if you care about farmers, go leave us a review. How about that Fred?

Fred: [inaudible 00:50:57].

Bryan Schaaf: Dynamite time. You can do that or visit certifiedangusbeef.com/podcast. Before we wrap, just want to offer my heartfelt thanks to the farmers, the ranchers, Mark McCully, yourself. Everybody that spends their days raising cattle to hit a high quality endpoint. They're not just doing it when it's warm and sunny and beautiful. Believe me, I grew up on a farm, right? The coldest days of the day is that you still have to get out there and have to take a deep breath before you head out into it. But now I'm in an office and I don't have to work nearly as hard as those folks.

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So on behalf of lazy people like me, farmers or ranchers everywhere, including Matt Perrier, thank you guys from the bottom of our heart. That's it. We appreciate you joining us on the Meat Speak Podcast powered by the Certified Angus beef brand for Chef Tony Biggs, for meat scientists, and Clark who's still across the parking lot playing with knives. Mark McCully, CEO of the American Angus Association. Thanks for listening